Advanced Research Methods in Counselling (ECAC7004)

Documentation for Assignment
Component 2: Assessment 2 of 4.

Practical: Skills Assessment

Prepare for, and undertake, a pilot qualitative research interview, using a fellow student as a participant.

David Hingley **Student no: 2307121**

Covering letter

David Hingley
<Insert appropriate address,
electronic contact details and
telephone contact
details here>

<Insert date here>

Dear *<insert name here>,*

RE: Research Project: Time-limited Counselling: Practitioners Views.

Thank you for expressing an interest in taking part in this research project. Externally imposed time-limitations are a feature of many counsellors' practice. This research project intends to explore counsellors' views and feelings about this. There are few studies that have explored the effects of externally imposed time-limits on counsellors and their practice. Most literature explores the concept of briefer, rather than time-limited, working.

The procedures of the research are explained in the attached documents. Please read them carefully. This will help you make an informed choice about whether you wish to contribute to this study or not.

This research is part of a Master's Degree programme at University of Wales Trinity David, and is supervised by *<insert supervisor here>.* I am able to undertake this because it has been approved by the University's Research Ethics Committee. As well as being a student on this course, I am also an Accredited Member of the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society and so I am also committed to upholding the standards relating to this professional body. I will do my very best to ensure that the interview will be carefully and considerately conducted, and of course, if you have any concerns about the way I conduct the research I encourage

you to raise them with me, or my research supervisor, whose contact details are: *<insert Details here>*

Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary. I hope the attached information is helpful in helping you decide whether to participate. If you have any remaining concerns after reading it, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. If after considering it you decide that you are willing to take part, please complete the attached consent form and return to me at the above address or contact me if you are interested but need further clarification.

Kind Regards,

David Hingley

Information Sheet.

Research Project: Time-limited Counselling: Practitioners' Views.

The purpose of this interview is for me to find out your thoughts, views, and feelings about time-limited counselling sessions and then consider the data that the interview produces alongside interview data collected from other counsellors. This will then help me to produce a research report that will add to the knowledge around this topic. The main focus will be on the time-limitations defined by a set number of sessions, but I will also be interested in hearing about what else this phrase may mean to you. The interview is semi-structured in nature, meaning that I have a schedule of areas to ask you about (that is included in this document pack) that will help me to stay focused. I hope that my guide will help us to have a flowing and relaxed conversation about the topic. I will use the same guide with other counsellors to find their thoughts views and feelings about time-limited counselling sessions. I hope that exploring a variety of counsellor's views will go a little way to helping us to understand how this issue affects practice.

We will have up to an hour to talk, and I'd like to use as much of that time as possible to learn what you think about the topic and the issues it raises. At the start of the interview I'll check that you are still happy to proceed and remind you what you consented to when you signed the attached form. I will also remind you that regardless of the consent you gave when you signed the form, you have an absolute right to end the interview at any point without a need to disclose your reason and without consequence. Similarly you can withdraw your consent to be part of this research at any point up to the submission/final report being completed.

For convenience and efficiency I will use Microsoft Teams software for the interview and will use it to record the interview, and its transcription abilities to capture your words in text form. The text transcription will be checked against the recording and corrected for accuracy. Later this will be analysed, along with other interview transcripts, to see what can be learned about the topic. The findings will be written up and used to assess my abilities as a researcher as part of the Masters's programme at University of Wales Trinity St David, but it is very likely

that I will share the findings more widely, informally and formally. Because of this I will take great care to ensure that your identity is hidden, even if I use quotations from your specific transcript. Any files, recordings and transcripts will be stored securely (in line with current law and Data Protection and GDPR requirements), only viewed by myself and, if necessary, my supervisor. Any information that I possess that would allow you to be identified will be destroyed once the research is completed.

I am very keen to ensure that the research report, however it may be presented, accurately reflects the views of the participants. With this in mind I offer the opportunity to check your transcript (including a right to censor any part of it) and see provisional reports that will lead to submission and/or other dissemination of the findings. If you would like to take part in that process please indicate this on the consent form attached.

After the interview is over I will check in with you that you are comfortable and happy with the process. If you do have any concerns then we can discuss them, and I will do my best to provide any information, or take action (under your direction, agreement or consent) that will help resolve them. I will also provide you with what I hope is some interesting and useful information relating to the topic.

Interview schedule

Research Project: Time-limited Counselling: Practitioners Views

Purpose of the Interview: This interview is part of a research project that intends to explore counsellors' views on time-limited practice. This is a piece of qualitative research that intends to add more knowledge to what is already known about this topic. In this interview I hope to explore your views and experiences about it. The following interview schedule provides an overview of topics and areas that will be used to explore the topic.

Interview Schedule:

1. Introduction
   - Welcome and thanks.
   - Re-explain the purpose of the interview and the research project.
   - Assure confidentiality and confirm informed consent.
   - Ask if they have any questions before proceeding.

2. Question Guides:

Q1: Exploring meaning.
I will ask you to share what comes to mind when you hear the phrase "time-limited" in a counselling context.

- Supplemental exploration (if needed) - Probe for more details about aspects that offer insight into the meaning this phrase has for you.

Q2: Benefits v/s disadvantages.
With specific reference to limits on the number of permitted sessions I will ask about whether you consider there are any specific benefits or disadvantages to working in this way.

- Probe (if needed) for both felt and concrete examples of benefits and disadvantages.
- Enquire further for examples of the impact on your working practices with clients.

Q3. Effect on interrupted sessions/"early" endings.

I will help you to explore the issues that arise when external time limitations create conflict for the counsellors.

- Specifically probe for details about how this affects them as a practitioner, as a person, and their feelings about, and relationship with counselling, their practice, their client and the agency who employs them.

Q4. Training, support, and preparation for time-limited working:

Explore ways in which you have been prepared for and/or been provided with appropriate training for time-limited working.

- Probe about pre-qualification training (content, approach, usefulness) and pre/post qualification training (content, approach, usefulness, how this was acquired)
- Probe about how/whether supervision supports you in this aspect of your work.

Q5. Preferred working methods:

Seek insights into your preferred way of working by asking them to explore the nature of counselling without imposed time-limits.

3. Closing

- Thank the participant for their time and valuable insights.
- Offer an opportunity for the participant to ask any final questions/share any immediate concerns.

- Describe next steps for the research and what will happen with the data they have provided.
- Restate confidentiality, anonymity, right to withdraw, and establish if the counsellor would like to see the results of the research prior to final report being made available.
- Offer debriefing information.

Consent Form

Research Project: Time Limited Counselling: Practitioners' Views.

Please initial any of the below statements that applies to you:

I have received, read and understand the information provided about this research. I have no reservations about content.	Initials
OR I have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions. I have had these answered satisfactorily and I understand that there will be further opportunities to address any questions until end of the research period, up to the point where I am able to withdraw.	Initials
I have contact details for the researcher and contact details of the main project supervisor should I have any concerns.	Initials
I understand that data will be exchanged, stored and retrieved, electronically. Data under the control of the researcher will be stored accordance with the Data Protection Act and that this will be destroyed once the research project is finalised. I also understand that actual quotations from my contributions may be used to support the research. My involvement in the study will be confidential and any data collected will be anonymised. Findings may be the subject of journal articles/conference presentations and/or for any related educational, counselling and related disciplines, or research work.	Initials
I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time up to the point where the report is finalised, without giving any reason, if I do so data collected relating to me will be destroyed and not used in the study.	Initials
Optional: I would like to review the data I provide before it is analysed, and have sight of the research findings before the report is finalised	Initials

I consent to take part in a face-to-face interview and to this being recorded. I also understand that at the end of the study, I will be provided with some further information and the opportunity to discuss any issues with the researcher.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Preferred Contact details: _____

Researcher taking consent:

Name:_____Signature:_____

End of Interview Information: Research Project:
Time-limited Counselling: Practitioners Views

Thank you for your contribution to this research and the time you have given. I hope that it was a useful discussion for you too.

Your contributions will be stored securely and will be analysed alongside the contributions of other participants, and I will create a report illustrating what has been learned through this process.

I'd like to remind you that preserving your anonymity is my responsibility, and that your right to withdraw from this study remains right up until my report is finalised for submission. I intend to finalise my report on *<insert date here>.* I am able to provide this date because the course has deadlines that I must meet.

I'd also like to remind you that you are welcome to view (and censor) any information you have provided, as well as more generalised information that appears as I work to complete the report. If you would like to do this please let me know.

Below are the details of my research supervisor, should you have any concerns you wish to raise. You may wish to keep these in a safe place for future reference.
Supervisor: ***<insert details here>***

As the interview has encouraged you to talk and reflect on your practice in the context of limitations, you may want an opportunity to explore those issues further. As you are a practising counsellor you may wish to explore these with your own supervisor, but you are also welcome to speak informally with me about them. You can contact me to do so, and my email address is: ***<insert email here>***

Over the page are a number of resources that I have found useful in exploring this issue, you may find them useful too. These are provided in a range of formats to aid accessibility.

Thank you once again,

David Hingley. MNCPS (Acred)

Useful resources:

Sage Publishers supply a range of books relating to brief working in various modalities of therapy and counselling. This link https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/disciplines/842 below will take you to a list, or you can search their website for Brief Therapy titles at: https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/home

For a good overview then I recommend **The Handbook Of Brief Therapies: A practical guide.** Edited by Sarah Parry,. ISBN: 9781526436429

Windy Dryden provides an overview of a related area, **ONEPlus therapy**, at this British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy webpage: https://www.bacp.co.uk/bacp-journals/university-and-college-counselling/may-2020/providing-help-at-the-point-of-need/

BRIEF www.brief.org.uk are long established and internationally recognised providers of training in Solution-Focused Brief Therapy. This approach was specifically designed around ideas of brief (rather than time-limited working). The approach is distinct and philosophically different from traditional person-centred or positivist problem-orientated approaches. Am extensive list of videos outlining the approach can be found at https://www.brief.org.uk/resources/mini-presentations.html.